

REMARKS

Claims 1-35 are currently pending in the above-referenced Application.

Claims 1-2, 4, 6-7, 9-11, 13-16, 18, 20, 23-30 and 32-25 stand rejected, with claims 3, 5, 8, 12, 17, 19, 21-22 and 31 standing as objected to as depending from rejected claims, but allowable if amended into independent form.

The Applicants have carefully considered the pending March 10, 2004 Office Action. In order to advance the case to issue, the Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 25 to incorporate the limitations of allowable claim 21. Claim 21 has been canceled accordingly, without prejudice to the subject matter contained therein.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-20 and 22-35 are now in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the pending rejections and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for these claims is respectfully requested.

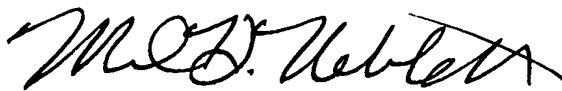
If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit

Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #225/50312US).

June 9, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. H. Neblett", with a stylized flourish at the end.

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